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(EV 304737505 US)

# SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR CALCULATING EFFECTIVE CAPACITANCE FOR TIMING ANALYSIS

Wolfgang Roethig

## Field of the Invention

**[0001]** This invention relates to the field of IC (Integrated Circuit) design and, more particular, to techniques for calculating the effective capacitance of an interconnect in an IC design.

## Background of the Invention

**[0002]** During the integrated circuit (IC) design process, various components within an IC design are modeled and simulated so that the performance of those components can be verified against various design requirements before the IC is physically produced. If the modeled IC design does not perform as required, various parts of the IC design are modified, and the resulting IC design is again modeled and simulated. This process continues until a satisfactory IC design is obtained.

**[0003]** An interconnect model can also be used to model the cell timing (based on cell delay and interconnect delay) of a cell connected to an interconnect being modeled. There are many different interconnect models. One model, referred to as a pi model, is generated using moment-matching techniques based on information extracted from the physical layout of the IC design. The pi model can be obtained by moment-matching the first three moments of the driving point admittance of a more complex interconnect model extracted from the physical layout. The resulting pi model, which includes two capacitances connected by a resistance, can then be reduced to a lumped-capacitance model, which includes a single effective capacitance. Conversion from a pi model to a lumped-capacitance model typically involves using numeric methods. The lumped-capacitance model represents the

driving point admittance of the interconnect model, which is in turn used to perform interconnect delay analysis.

**[0004]** In general, it is desirable that interconnect models represent the real-world performance of an interconnect as accurately as possible. More accurate interconnect models allow designers to more reliably detect design errors while also reducing the amount of overdesign (i.e., designing an IC more conservatively than is actually required, resulting in unneeded components or space or in decreased performance). However, the desire for more accurate interconnect models is balanced against the need to obtain an interconnect model within a reasonable amount of time. Generally, the more accurate the modeling technique, the more computationally intensive it is to obtain the model. Accordingly, less accurate models are often used in commercial applications because such models can be obtained significantly more quickly for complicated IC designs than more accurate models could be obtained. Since interconnect delay analysis is a necessary part of the IC design process, it is desirable to have techniques for obtaining the effective capacitance of an interconnect model that are both accurate and relatively simple to obtain.

## Overview of Interconnect Models

**[0005]** **FIG. 1** illustrates a generic interconnect model used to perform interconnect delay analysis in VDSM (Very Deep Sub-Micron) IC design processes. The model in **FIG. 1** includes virtual source node **101** at which voltage $\mathbf{V_0(t)}$ is applied as a stimulus to driver **110**. Driver **110** represents a gate coupled to drive a signal on the interconnect represented by R(L)C network **120** (R(L)C refers to a network that includes one or more resistances R and one or more capacitances C, and that can, in some cases, include one or more optional inductances L).

**[0006]** The model includes driving point node **103**. Voltage $\mathbf{V_{DP}(t)}$ is measured between driving point node **103** and ground. Driving point node **103** is located between the output of driver **110** and the input to R(L)C network **120**. Current $\mathbf{I_{DP}(t)}$ flows from driver **110** to R(L)C network **120**.

**[0007]** R(L)C network **120** models an interconnect as an R(L)C network without a DC (Direct Current) connection to ground. R(L)C network **120** includes N interconnect nodes (only one such interconnect node, interconnect node **105(k)**, is

shown in the example of **FIG. 1**). Capacitance $C_k$ couples interconnect node **105(k)** to ground, and voltage $V_k(t)$ is measured across capacitance $C_k$. Each other interconnect node (if any) in R(L)C network **120** is similarly coupled to ground by a respective capacitance across which a respective voltage is measured.

**[0008]** R(L)C network 120 can be obtained by extracting predicted electrical parasitics from the physical layout of an IC design. The model of **FIG. 1** is characterized by its voltage transfer function, Hk(s) = Vk(s)/V0(s), and its driving point admittance Y(s), where $Y(s) = I_{DP}(s)/V_{DP}(s)$. The driving point admittance represents the admittance of R(L)C network **120** as seen at driving point node **103**. The model of **FIG. 1** can be reduced to an Nth order model by matching the first N+1 moments of the driving point admittance Y(s). Such a reduction simplifies delay calculation, while preserving at least some of the accuracy of the representation of the driving point admittance Y(s).

**[0009]** The timing characteristics of cells in an IC design are typically characterized by a lumped capacitive load. However, such characterizations are typically too inaccurate to represent R(L)C network **120**. At the same time, using the model of **FIG. 1** to perform timing analysis may be undesirable, due the large amount of computation effort needed to analyze the model. To preserve at least some accuracy while reducing the computation effort, the model of **FIG. 1** is typically reduced to an equivalent lumped-capacitance interconnect model like the one shown in **FIG. 2**.

**[0010]** **FIG. 2** illustrates a lumped-capacitance interconnect model that is derived from the interconnect model shown in **FIG. 1**. The lumped-capacitance interconnect model is similar to the interconnect model of **FIG. 1**, but R(L)C network **120** has been replaced with $C_{eff}$. $C_{eff}$ is the effective capacitance of R(L)C network **120**. Current **I(t)** flows into $C_{eff}$, and voltage **V(t)** is measured across $C_{eff}$.

**[0011]** $C_{eff}$ is an "effective" capacitance in that its value is selected so that the average current flowing through $C_{eff}$ of **FIG. 2** is equal to the average current flowing through driving point node **103** of **FIG. 1**. The average current (Iavg, shown in the equation below) flowing through $C_{eff}$ equals the product of 1/T and the integral from t = 0 to t = T of I(t)dt, which in turn equals the product of 1/T, $C_{eff}$, and V(T) (with

V(0) = 0). Time t = 0 is the time at which ramp voltage $\mathbf{V_0(t)}$ stimulus to driver **110** begins ramping up; t = T is the time at which ramp voltage $\mathbf{V_0(t)}$ reaches its final value.

$$I_{avg} = \frac{1}{T} \cdot \int_0^T I(t)dt = \frac{1}{T} \cdot C_{eff} \cdot V(T)$$

The average current ($I_{DP}$avg, shown in the equation below) through driving point node **103** equals the product of 1/T and the integral from t = 0 to t = T of $I_{DP}(t)dt$. This average current in turn equals the product of 1/T and the sum, from k = 1 to N, of the product of $C_k$ and $V_k(T)$, with $V_k(0) = 0$. N is the total number of interconnect nodes in R(L)C network **120** of **FIG. 1**.

$$I_{DPavg} = \frac{1}{T} \cdot \int_0^T I_{DP}(t)dt = \frac{1}{T} \cdot \sum_{k=1}^{N} C_k \cdot V_k(T)$$

By equating Iavg with $I_{DP}$avg, equation **Eq. 1** in **FIG. 2** is obtained.

**[0012]** Equation **Eq. 1** is used to calculate the value of the effective capacitance, $\mathbf{C_{eff}}$, for use in the lumped-capacitance interconnect model, from the characteristics of an interconnect model such as the one shown in **FIG. 1**. Equation **Eq. 1** states that the product of $\mathbf{C_{eff}}$ and **V(T)** is equal to the sum, from k=1 to k = N, of the product of $\mathbf{C_k}$ and $\mathbf{V_k(T)}$ (as shown in **FIG. 1**). N is the total number of interconnect nodes in R(L)C network **120** of **FIG. 1**.

**[0013]** The equation Eq. 1 shown in **FIG. 2** requires a numerical solution if N > 1 and $\mathbf{V_{DP}(t)}$ is not equal to **V(t)** (i.e., if the driving point voltage in FIG 1 is not equal to the voltage across the effective capacitance $\mathbf{C_{eff}}$ in FIG 2). **V(T)** depends on $\mathbf{C_{eff}}$ (i.e., $\mathbf{V(T) = f(C_{eff})}$). To solve **Eq. 1** thus requires the use of numerical methods (e.g., trial and error, Newton-Raphson iteration, and the like). The use of numerical methods can undesirably increase the computation effort needed to calculate the value of $\mathbf{C_{eff}}$. For example, faster processors, larger memories, and/or more computation time may be required to solve for $\mathbf{C_{eff}}$ than is desirable.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

**[0014]** Various methods and systems for calculating effective capacitance are disclosed. These methods and systems may, in at least some embodiments, provide a closed-form effective capacitance calculation.

**[0015]** In some embodiments, a method involves: accessing data representing an interconnect model, where the interconnect model includes a driving point node and is not a lumped capacitance model; calculating a value of an effective capacitance of the interconnect model to be inversely proportional to a voltage at the driving point node of the interconnect model; and storing the value of the effective capacitance. In some embodiments, the interconnect model is a pi model. In other embodiments, the interconnect model includes one or more inductances. Program instructions implementing such a method can be stored on a computer readable medium.

**[0016]** Calculating the effective capacitance can also involve calculating the effective capacitance to be directly proportional to a sum of one or more products, where each of the products equals a product of a respective one of one or more capacitances included in the interconnect model and a voltage across the respective capacitance. Such a method can also involve accessing data representing a driver model and calculating the value of the effective capacitance as a function of a value (e.g., of a driver resistance $R_{driver}$) included in the driver model.

**[0017]** The foregoing is a summary and thus contains, by necessity, simplifications, generalizations and omissions of detail; consequently, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the summary is illustrative only and is not intended to be in any way limiting. The operations disclosed herein may be implemented in a number of ways, and such changes and modifications may be made without departing from this invention and its broader aspects. Other aspects of the present invention, as defined solely by the claims, will become apparent in the non-limiting detailed description set forth below.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0018]** A more complete understanding of the present invention may be acquired by referring to the following description and the accompanying drawings, in which like reference numbers indicate like features.

**[0019]** **FIG. 1** illustrates a generic interconnect model used to perform interconnect delay analysis in VDSM (Very Deep Sub-Micron) IC design processes.

**[0020]** **FIG. 2** illustrates a lumped-capacitance interconnect model that is derived from the interconnect model shown in **FIG. 1**.

**[0021]** **FIG. 3** shows an equation that can be used to calculate the effective capacitance of an R(L)C interconnect model, according to one embodiment.

**[0022]** **FIG. 4** shows an exemplary pi interconnect load model from which an effective capacitance can be calculated, according to one embodiment.

**[0023]** **FIG. 5A** is a flowchart of a method of calculating effective capacitance, according to one embodiment.

**[0024]** **FIG. 5B** shows another example of a method of calculating effective capacitance, according to another embodiment.

**[0025]** **FIG. 6** shows a series of equations useable to calculate the effective capacitance of a pi model, according to one embodiment.

**[0026]** **FIG. 7** is a flowchart of a method of calculating the effective capacitance of a pi model, according to one embodiment.

**[0027]** **FIG. 8** illustrates another interconnect model from which an effective capacitance can be calculated, according to one embodiment.

**[0028]** **FIG. 9** illustrates yet another interconnect model from which effective capacitance can be calculated, according to one embodiment.

**[0029]** **FIG. 10** illustrates a computer system that runs software configured to calculate effective capacitance, according to one embodiment.

**[0030]** While the invention is susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments of the invention are provided as examples in the drawings and detailed description. It should be understood that the drawings and detailed description are not intended to limit the invention to the particular form disclosed. Instead, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**[0031]** **FIG. 3** illustrates equation **Eq. 2**, which is usable to calculate the effective capacitance of an interconnect from the nodal capacitances included in an interconnect model, such as the one illustrated in **FIG. 1**, of the interconnect. Thus, equation **Eq. 2** can be used to calculate $C_{eff}$, for use in a lumped capacitance model such as the one illustrated in **FIG. 2**, from the characteristics of a more complex non-lumped-capacitance interconnect model like that shown in **FIG. 1**. As shown by **Eq. 2**, the effective capacitance $C_{eff}$ can be interpreted as a weighted sum of capacitances $C_k$, where the weighting factor is the ratio between the voltage $V_k(T)$ across that capacitance and the voltage $V_{DP}(T)$ at driving point node **103** (as shown in **FIG. 1**). Thus, $C_{eff}$ is proportional to the sum of the products of each nodal capacitance $C_k$ multiplied by its respective nodal voltage, at time t = T, $V_k(T)$, and $C_{eff}$ is inversely proportional to $V_{DP}(T)$. Voltage $V_k(T)$ is voltage $V_k(t)$, as shown in **FIG. 1**, at time t = T, and voltage $V_{DP}(T)$ is voltage $V_{DP}(t)$ at time t = 0 (as mentioned above, time t=0 is the time at which ramp voltage $V_0(t)$ stimulus to driver **110** begins ramping up; t=T is the time at which ramp voltage $V_0(t)$ reaches its final value).

**[0032]** Equation **Eq. 2** provides a closed-form solution for at least some interconnect models, since all of the voltages $V_k(T)$ can be precalculated for a given R(L)C network if N is less than or equal to 2 and since $V_{DP}(T)$ is not a function of $C_{eff}$. For certain interconnect models, $C_{eff}$ can be calculated from the equation of **FIG. 3** using analytic (as opposed to numerical) techniques. Analytical techniques are typically much less complex and computationally intensive than numerical techniques.

**[0033]** It is noted that $V_{DP}(T)$ of equation **Eq. 2** differs from **V(T)** of equation **Eq. 1** in several ways. **V(T)** is the voltage across the effective capacitance $C_{eff}$ in a lumped capacitance model. **V(T)** is thus dependent on $C_{eff}$ and cannot be calculated independently of $C_{eff}$ using traditional techniques. In contrast, $V_{DP}(T)$ is the driving point voltage across the input to a non-lumped-capacitance interconnect model that includes an R(L)C network. $V_{DP}(T)$ does not depend on $C_{eff}$ (which is not part of the R(L)C network modeled by a non-lumped-capacitance interconnect model), and thus, unlike **V(T)**, $V_{DP}(T)$ can be calculated independently of $C_{eff}$.

**[0034]** The equation **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3** can be used with various different interconnect models that include one or more nodal capacitances coupled to ground. Exemplary interconnect models from which equation **Eq. 2** can calculate an effective capacitance are shown in **FIGs. 4** and **8-9**.

**[0035]** **FIG. 4** shows an exemplary pi interconnect load model from which an effective capacitance can be calculated using equation **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3**. In this example, driver **110** is coupled to interconnect model **400**. Driver **110** is represented by a voltage source **111**, across which a voltage $V_0(t)$ is applied, and a resistance $R_{driver}$.

**[0036]** In this example, interconnect model **400** is a pi model that includes capacitance $C_1$, capacitance $C_2$, and resistor $R_{wire}$. $R_{wire}$ couples $C_1$ and $C_2$. The interconnect model **400** includes two interconnect nodes **105(1)** and **105(2)**. Driving point node **103** is at the same electrical potential as interconnect node **105(1)**, and thus the voltage $V_{DP}(t)$ measured between the driving point node and ground is the same as the voltage $V_1(t)$ measured across $C_1$.

**[0037]** Equation **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3** can be used to calculate the effective capacitance $C_{eff}$ of interconnect model **400**. In the example of **FIG. 4**, the effective capacitance $Ceff = C_1 * V_1(t)/V_{DP}(t) + C_2 * V_2(t)/V_{DP}(t)$. Since $V_1(t) = V_{DP}(t)$, this equation reduces to $C_{eff} = C_1 + C_2 * V_2(t)/V_{DP}(t)$. Additional details regarding the calculation of $V_{DP}(t)$ and $V_2(t)$ are provided below with respect to **FIGs. 6-7**.

**[0038]** **FIG. 5A** illustrates a method of calculating the effective capacitance of an interconnect model. At **501**, stored values indicative of each capacitance, resistance, and/or inductance in the interconnect model and/or driver model from which the

effective capacitance is being calculated are accessed. For example, if the interconnect model from which the effective capacitance is to be calculated is a pi model like that shown in **FIG. 4**, values representing nodal capacitances $C_1$ and $C_2$ (from the pi model) and resistances $R_{wire}$ (from the pi model) and $R_{driver}$ (from the driver model) are accessed. These values can be accessed from a stored interconnect model representing an interconnect in an IC design and a stored driver model representing a gate in the IC design.

**[0039]** At **503**, the values accessed at **501** are used to calculate the voltage at each node in the interconnect model (each node is a point coupled to ground by a respective one of the capacitances in the interconnect model, and thus the voltage at each node is the voltage across a respective capacitance) and the voltage at the driving point node of the interconnect model. For example, if the interconnect model is the pi model shown in **FIG. 4**, the values of $R_{wire}$, $R_{driver}$, $C_1$, and $C_2$ can be processed to obtain values representing the voltage at interconnect nodes **105(1)** and **105(2)** as well as the voltage at the driving point node **103** (in this example the voltage at the driving point node **103** is the same as the voltage at the first interconnect node **105(1)**).

**[0040]** The effective capacitance is calculated to be inversely proportional to the voltage at the driving point node and proportional to the sum of the products formed by multiplying each one of the capacitances by the voltage across that capacitance, as indicated at **505**. At **507**, a value indicative of the effective capacitance generated at **505** is stored. This value may then be used to perform timing analysis of an IC design in which the interconnect represented by the interconnect model is included.

**[0041]** It is noted that, in at least some embodiments, the computation that calculates the effective capacitance (e.g., in function **505**) and the computation(s) to calculate the voltage across each capacitance and the voltage at the driving point node (e.g., in function **503**) can be substantially combined. For example, the values of the capacitances, resistances, and/or inductances in the interconnect model can be accessed as input parameters to a process that calculates the effective capacitance. Such a process may perform computations according to **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3**, into which expressions representing the individual voltages $V_k$ and $V_{DP}$ have been substituted. Thus, the voltages $V_k$ and $V_{DP}$ may be calculated as part of the process of calculating $C_{eff}$. Execution of such a process may not necessarily store the values of these

voltages in such a way that they are accessible to external processes. Furthermore, in some embodiments, these voltages are not independently calculated at all. For example, a process that calculates effective capacitance can operate according to a formula that, due to algebraic reductions after the expressions for the individual voltages have been substituted into **Eq. 2**, does not actually calculate each of the individual voltages across the capacitances and/or the voltage at the driving point node (e.g., the process may operate on the input parameters according to an equation such as **Eq. 9** of **FIG. 6**). In such embodiments, function **503** is not performed. However, the effective capacitance calculated by such processes is still calculated in such a way that the effective capacitance is inversely proportional to the voltage at the driving point node and directly proportional the sum of the products formed by multiplying each one of the capacitances by the voltage across that capacitance.

**[0042]** **FIG. 5B** illustrates another method of calculating the effective capacitance of an interconnect model. As in the method of **FIG. 5A**, this method involves accessing values indicative of each capacitance, resistance, and/or inductance in the interconnect model and/or driver model, as shown at **551**. These values can then be used to calculate the voltage at the driving point node of the interconnect model and the voltages across each of the capacitances, as indicated at **553**.

**[0043]** At **555**, each capacitance (accessed at **501**) is scaled by ratio of the voltage across that capacitance to voltage at the driving point node. The scaled capacitances are summed to produce effective capacitance, as indicated at **557**. As with functions **503-505** of **FIG. 5A**, functions **553-557** of **FIG. 5B** can be combined in some embodiments. At **559**, a value indicative of the effective capacitance generated at **557** is stored.

**[0044]** It is noted that functions **555-557** of **FIG. 5B** operate to calculate the effective capacitance in a fashion that is consistent with function **505** of **FIG. 5A**. In other words, the effective capacitance generated by function **557** of **FIG. 5B** is inversely proportional to the voltage at the driving point node and directly proportional the sum of the products formed by multiplying each one of the capacitances by the voltage across that capacitance. Other methods can also calculate the effective capacitance in a way that is consistent with function **505** of **FIG. 5A**. For example, the effective capacitance can be calculated by summing the products

formed by multiplying each one of the capacitances in the interconnect model by the voltage across that capacitance, and then dividing the sum by the voltage at the driving point node. Alternatively, the effective capacitance can be calculated by calculating the products formed by multiplying each one of the capacitances in the interconnect model by the voltage across that capacitance, dividing each of those products by the voltage at the driving point node, and then summing each of the modified products.

**[0045]** **FIG. 6** shows equations that can be used to calculate the effective capacitance of the pi interconnect model shown in **FIG. 4**. **Eqs. 3** calculate three time constants, $T_{11}$, $T_{12}$, and $T_{22}$ from the values of the capacitances and resistances in the pi interconnect model and the driver model (these capacitances and resistances are examples of the values accessed in function **501** of **FIG. 5A**). **Eqs. 4** calculate additional time constants, $T_{Root}$ and $T_{Elmore}$, from the time constants generated by **Eqs. 3**. **Eqs. 5** calculate constants $s_1$ and $s_2$ from the time constants generated by **Eqs. 3** and **4**. Constants $s_1$ and $s_2$ are then used, in conjunction with $T_{22}$ and $T_{Root}$, to generate constants $\tau^1_1$, $\tau^1_2$, $\tau^2_1$, and $\tau^2_2$, as shown by **Eqs. 6**. Equations **Eq. 7** show the time domain responses of $V_1(t)$ and $V_2(t)$ of the pi model in response to a ramp voltage $V_0(t)$ at the driver ($\mathbf{V_0(t)}$, $\mathbf{V_1(t)}$, and $\mathbf{V_2(t)}$ are shown in **FIG. 4**). Eqs. 3-6 are examples of equations that can be used to calculate the voltages in function **503** in **FIG. 5A**.

**[0046]** **Eq. 8** shows the effective capacitance equation **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3** into which the specific parameters of the pi model have been input. Since there are two capacitances in the pi model, N = 2. Since $V_{DP} = V_1$, the first term of equation **Eq. 8** is $C_1$ (which equals $C_1 * V_1(T)/V_{DP}(T)$). For the same reason, the second term of equation **Eq. 8** is $C_2/V_1(T)$.

**[0047]** Expressions for $V_1(T)$ and $V_2(T)$ are obtained by setting t = T in equations **Eqs. 7**. These expressions are combined with **Eq. 8** to produce **Eq. 9**. Using **Eq. 9**, the effective capacitance of the pi model can be calculated directly from the values $R_{wire}$, $R_{driver}$, $C_1$, and $C_2$ (**Eq. 9** provides a way to combine functions **503** and **505** of **FIG. 5A**). Thus, the example equations of **FIG. 6** show how the use of **Eq. 2** in **FIG. 3** can provide a closed-form solution for calculating effective capacitance of a pi model.

**[0048]** **FIG. 7** shows how effective capacitance can be calculated for a pi model. At **701**, stored values indicative of capacitances and resistances in a pi interconnect model are accessed. Time constants (e.g., $T_{11}$, $T_{12}$, and $T_{22}$ from **FIG. 6**) for the pi model are calculated from the values accessed at **701**, as shown at **703**. At **705**, the time constants calculated at **703** and the values accessed at **701** are used to calculate other constants (e.g., $s_1$, $s_2$, $T_{Root}$, $T_{Elmore}$, $\tau^1_1$, $\tau^1_2$, $\tau^2_1$, and $\tau^2_2$). $C_{eff}$ is then calculated from the constants calculated at **705** & the values of capacitances accessed at **701**, using **Eq. 9** of **FIG. 6**.

**[0049]** **FIG. 8** illustrates another example of an interconnect load model **400** for which effective capacitance can be calculated using the equation of **FIG. 3**. This model can represent a multi-fanout net with unbalanced loads on several branches. This model can also represent an interconnect that is experiencing coupling (i.e., non-grounded capacitance), since $\mathbf{R_1}$ and $\mathbf{R_2}$ of **FIG. 8** can each represent, partially or totally, the holding resistances of the coupled nets.

**[0050]** In this example, interconnect model **400** is represented by a model that has two parallel branches. Each branch includes a resistance in series with a capacitance that is coupled to ground. The first branch includes resistance $\mathbf{R_1}$ and capacitance $\mathbf{C_1}$. Interconnect node **105(1)** is located at the point where resistance $\mathbf{R_1}$ is coupled to capacitance $\mathbf{C_1}$. Capacitance $\mathbf{C_1}$ couples interconnect node **105(1)** to ground. The second branch includes resistance $\mathbf{R_2}$ and capacitance $\mathbf{C_2}$. Interconnect node **105(2)** is located between capacitance $\mathbf{C_2}$ and resistance $\mathbf{R_2}$. Capacitance $\mathbf{C_2}$ couples interconnect node **105(2)** to ground. Note that in other embodiments, interconnect load model **400** can include more branches than are illustrated in **FIG. 8**.

**[0051]** In **FIG. 8**, voltage $\mathbf{V_1(t)}$ at interconnect node **105(1)** is the voltage across capacitance $\mathbf{C_1}$. Voltage $\mathbf{V_2(t)}$ at interconnect node **105(2)** is similarly the voltage across capacitance $\mathbf{C_2}$. Unlike the example of **FIG. 4**, driving point voltage $\mathbf{V_{DP}(t)}$ of this interconnect model is not the same as one of the voltages $\mathbf{V_1(t)}$ or $\mathbf{V_2(t)}$ across one of the capacitances. Using equation **Eq. 2**, the effective capacitance of interconnect load **400** can be expressed as $C_{eff} = C_1 * V_1(T)/V_{DP}(T) + C_2 * V_2(T)/V_{DP}(T)$. Values of $V_1(T)$, $V_{DP}(T)$, and $V_2(T)$ can be obtained using typical circuit analysis techniques and calculated from the values of $R_{driver}$, $R_1$, $R_2$, $C_1$, and $C_2$.

**[0052]** **FIG. 9** illustrates another interconnect model for which effective capacitance can be calculated using equation **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3**. In this example, both driver model **110** and interconnect model **400** include an inductance. Driver model **110** includes inductance $\mathbf{L_{driver}}$, and interconnect model **400** includes inductance $\mathbf{L_{wire}}$. The driver model **110** and interconnect model **400** of this example can be useful, for example, when calculating delay for circuitry designed to be operated above 500 MHz.

**[0053]** In addition to inductance $\mathbf{L_{wire}}$, interconnect model **400** includes resistance $\mathbf{R_{wire}}$ and capacitance $\mathbf{C_{wire}}$. $\mathbf{L_{wire}}$, $\mathbf{R_{wire}}$, and $\mathbf{C_{wire}}$ are arranged in series. $\mathbf{C_{wire}}$ is coupled between $\mathbf{R_{wire}}$ and ground. Interconnect node **105(1)** is located between $\mathbf{C_{wire}}$ and $\mathbf{R_{wire}}$. Voltage $\mathbf{V_1(t)}$ at interconnect node **105(1)** is the voltage across $\mathbf{C_{wire}}$.

**[0054]** Using equation **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3**, the effective capacitance $\mathbf{C_{eff}}$ of the interconnect load model **400** is $C_{wire} * V_1(T)/V_{DP}(T)$. $V_1(T)$ and $I_{DP}(T)$ can be analytically calculated in response to $\mathbf{V_0}$ from values of $\mathbf{L_{driver}}$, $\mathbf{L_{wire}}$, $\mathbf{R_{driver}}$, and $\mathbf{R_{wire}}$. As part of this calculation, the inductances $\mathbf{L_{driver}}$ and $\mathbf{L_{wire}}$ can be lumped together, as may be the resistances $\mathbf{R_{driver}}$ and $\mathbf{R_{wire}}$. $\mathbf{V_{DP}(T)}$ can be calculated from $\mathbf{V_1(T)}$ and $\mathbf{I_{DP}(T)}$ using Ohm's law.

**[0055]** **FIG. 10** shows a block diagram of a computer system **1000** that includes software configured to calculate effective capacitance from an interconnect model **400**, according to one embodiment. As illustrated, computer system **1000** includes one or more processors **1002**, I/O interface **1004** (e.g., a bus bridge, network interface card, or other device for interfacing to other computers or to peripheral devices), and memory **1006**. Memory **1006** stores data and instructions, executable by processor **1002**, that implement interconnect model **400**, cell library **1052**, effective capacitance generation tool **1054**, and timing analysis tool **1056**. The instructions and data stored in memory **1006** can be organized into one or more data and/or program files.

**[0056]** I/O interface **1004** is coupled to a storage device **1075**. Storage device **1075** can be coupled to computer system **1000** by a bus, network (e.g., the Internet), or other interconnect. Storage device **1075** provides a persistent store for information accessed by computer system **1000** and can be implemented using magnetic, optical and/or mechanical (e.g., MEMS (Micro Electro-Mechanical Systems) memory.

Storage device **1075** can include a single storage device or an array of storage devices.

**[0057]** Interconnect model **400** is an R(L)C model of an interconnect model included in an IC design. Interconnect model **400** can be obtained in response to extracting information indicative of the predicted characteristics of an interconnect from the physical layout of the IC design. Interconnect model **400** can be any of various types of R(L)C networks. For example, interconnect model **400** can be a pi model (e.g., as shown in **FIG. 4**), a multi-fanout net with unbalanced loads (e.g., as shown in **FIG. 8**), an interconnect model that includes inductance (e.g., as shown in **FIG. 9**), or any other appropriate interconnect model that includes one or more capacitances coupled to ground.

**[0058]** Cell library **1052** includes various standard components and precalculated information useable to model and simulate the performance and functionality of components included in an IC design. In particular, cell library **1052** includes information representing various cells (e.g., logic gates and other components) included in the IC design. Cell library **1052** can include, for example, a driver model for each cell. The driver model for a cell coupled to the interconnect modeled by interconnect model **400** can be used in conjunction with the interconnect model **400** to calculate the effective capacitance of the interconnect model. For example, parameters such as $R_{driver}$ and/or $L_{driver}$ can be obtained from the driver model for the cell.

**[0059]** Effective capacitance generation tool **1054** is a process that is configured to generate the effective capacitance, for use in a lumped-capacitance model, of an interconnect modeled by interconnect model **400**. Effective capacitance generation tool **1054** generates the effective capacitance according to **Eq. 2** of **FIG. 3**. Effective capacitance generation tool **1054** uses information included in interconnect model **400** and cell library **1052** (e.g., such as information about the driver coupled to that interconnect) to calculate effective capacitance. Effective capacitance generation tool **1054** stores the calculated effective capacitance as effective capacitance value **1058**.

**[0060]** In some embodiments, effective capacitance generation tool **1054** calculates values of effective capacitance for several different values of each

parameter in a given type interconnect model. For example, if the type of interconnect model being considered is a pi model, effective capacitance generation tool **1054** can calculate values of effective capacitance for each of several values of each parameter ($C_1$, $R_{driver}$, $R_{wire}$, and $C_2$) in the pi model. The different effective capacitance values can be stored in a lookup table and indexed by the values of the parameters used to generate each different effective capacitance value. By precharacterizing the type of interconnect model according to a lookup table, the value of the effective capacitance for a given instance of that type of interconnect model can be calculated by interpolating between values in the lookup table based on the relationship between the actual parameters of that instance of the interconnect model and the values of the parameters used to index into the lookup table. Thus, in some embodiments, effective capacitance value **1058** may be one of several effective capacitance values included in a lookup table.

**[0061]** Timing analysis tool **1056** is configured to perform timing analysis of a substantially complete IC design. Timing analysis tool **1056** uses the effective capacitance value **1058** to calculate, for example, the driving point admittance of a lumped-capacitance model derived from interconnect model **400**. The driving point admittance can then be used to analyze the timing of the IC design that includes the interconnect modeled by interconnect model **400**.

**[0062]** If effective capacitance generation tool **1054** has precalculated a lookup table of different effective capacitance values, timing analysis tool **1056** can access the lookup table, based on the specific values of one or more parameters of interconnect model **400**, and interpolate between values in the lookup table to obtain the effective capacitance.

**[0063]** It is noted that, in at least some embodiments, the tools and data illustrated as being stored in memory **1006** in **FIG. 10** can be distributed across computer systems and storage devices linked by one or more networks. For example, cell library **1052** may be stored in a storage device coupled to computer system **1000** by a LAN (Local Area Network) or SAN (Storage Area Network). Portions of cell library **1052** can be loaded into memory **1006** of a particular computer system as different parts of the IC design are analyzed by applications such as effective capacitance

generation tool **1054** and/or timing analysis tool **1056** executing on that computer system.

**[0064]** Different applications can execute on different computer systems and exchange results via a network. For example, effective capacitance generation tool **1054** can be configured to calculate one or more effective capacitance values for a given instance of an interconnect model and/or for a given type of interconnect model and to store the effective value(s) (e.g., as part of a lookup table) to a network storage device **1075**. This stored information can then be accessed by timing analysis tool **1056**, which is executing on a different computer system than effective capacitance generation tool **1054**.

**[0065]** The tools illustrated as being separate applications in **FIG. 10** can also be implemented as a single application in some embodiments. For example, functionality implemented by effective capacitance generation tool **1054** can be integrated into a single application with timing analysis tool **1056**.

**[0066]** The program instructions and data implementing interconnect model **400**, cell library **1052**, effective capacitance generation tool **1054**, and/or timing analysis tool **1056** can be stored upon various computer readable media such as memory **1006**. In some embodiments, software implementing at least some of these tools is stored on a computer readable medium such as a CD (Compact Disc), DVD (Digital Versatile Disc), hard disk, optical disk, tape device, floppy disk, and the like). In order be executed by processor **1002**, the instructions and data implementing the tools and/or models are loaded into memory **1006** from the other computer readable medium. In some embodiments, a computer readable medium is a carrier medium such as a network and/or a wireless link upon which signals such as electrical, electromagnetic, or digital signals, on which the data and instructions implementing the tools and/or models are encoded, are conveyed.

**[0067]** Although the present invention has been described with respect to a specific embodiment thereof, various changes and modifications may be suggested to one skilled in the art. It is intended that such changes and modifications fall within the scope of the appended claims.